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ABSTRACT

Examples from American slave narratives offer demonstrative evidence that slave biographies and autobiographies deal with the worthwhile theme of the denial of and struggle for freedom and contain exciting adventure plots consisting of mystery, romance, risk-taking and disguises. Characters striving for freedom exhibit positive traits such as conviction, courage, and creativity. Dialogue as well as song lyrics contain humor and wit and often act as coded forms of resistance. The slave narrative genre offers compelling and inspiring resource materials, including vivid and varied locales of potential interest to young people. Suggestions are offered on how these materials can be integrated with a variety of classroom activities -- music, art, writing, discussion, debate, dramatization, and dance. The story of the black runaway comprises one of the most meaningful chapters on American history. (Author/KSM)

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THE AMERICAN SLAVE NARRATIVE: DRAMATIC RESOURCE MATERIAL FOR THE CLASSROOM

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Milton Polsky

Introduction

In light of this country's continuing interest in Afro-American history, recent studies have concluded that the tendency to gloss over and equivocate about the nature of slavery must come to an end. Educators concur that there must be a new assessment for both black and white children regarding the positive role black abolitionists played in resisting their bondage. (1)

The value of young people's acquaintance with the period of slavery cannot be underestimated. Melville J. Herskovits has observed that the "extent to which the past of a people is regarded as praiseworthy, their own self-esteem will be high and the opinion of others will be favorable." (2) Yet, even in a number of recently revised texts, black participation in the abolitionist movement (which reflects self-advancement in the struggle for freedom) has been either neglected or markedly de-emphasized. Charles H. Wesley has noted that such neglect ". . . serves to create an assumption of an inferior history rather than a difference of culture. . . ." (3)

A knowledge of slavery and the heroic efforts to resist it not only restores for young people a neglected aspect of history, but additionally supports a positive self-image in black children. For example, for slaves to even conceive the possibility of escape and other forms of resistance under conditions of duress, "required a special quality of mind: imagination, independence, cunning, daring and a sense of self-pride. (4) While such insight is crucial for a feeling of historial self-worth in the black child, it is also important in terms of the white child's perception of

the black people's struggle for racial equality in this country.

Because they are first-hand accounts, slave narratives provide an impressive record of the meaning of the slaves' experiences. No work better presents an illumination of black bondage than the victim's own point of view.

Background of the American Slave Narrative

Slave narratives are biographical and autobiographical tales of bondage and freedom either written or told by former slaves. The majority of them were "told to" accounts written with the aid of abolitionist editors between 1830 and 1865. A number of narratives (including the work of Frederick Douglass), however, were written solely by the author and are, therefore, referred to as authentic autobiographies. The first of more than six thousand extant slave narratives were published in 1703, and the autobiographical account of George Washington Carver published in 1944 is considered the last of the genre.(5) Primarily written as propaganda, the narratives served as important weapons in the warfare against slavery. Taken as a whole, slave narratives can be considered as a literary genre for a number of reasons. They are united by the common purpose of pointing up the evils of slavery and combatting the antebellum notion of black inferiority. In the narratives one finds a striking similarity of language; simple and often dramatic accounts of personal experience; strong revelation of the character of both "ordinary" and "extraordinary" men and women; and ironic humor and other submerged elements of protest literature.

Vernon Loggins has observed that excepting his folk songs, the black man's "most valuable contributions to American literature have been in the form of personal memoirs."(6) Despite his deeply degrading status, the slave retained the very human desire to express himself and to communicate to others what it was like to be a slave.

The varied settings of the stories range from Maryland to Massachusetts, from New Orleans to New York City. There are tales of men and women, girls and boys, of blacksmiths and field hands, of jockeys and small businessmen, those who fled to freedom and those who purchased it; stories of good and bad whites, scenes of horror, humor, dangers, and pathos; "Almost always, the enemy is the same-- the slave system that imprisons both black and white."(7)

Before 1830, the major thrust of slave narratives is concerned with individual slaves and individual escapes from bondage. After 1831, with the upsurge of the anti-slavery crusade, thousands of slave biographies and autobiographies were published. Most of these narratives were written with the assistance of Boston and New York abolitionist editors and thus "contain literary, ethical and sentimental elements added by the white ghost writers and editors."(8)

In general, the slaves' amanuenses--editors who took down the accounts--were persons of unquestionable integrity. Such writers as Lydia Marie Child, John G. Whittier and Edmund Quincy were well aware that their efforts in behalf of abolitionism could not be advanced by fraud.

In many narratives documents are appended which establish the reliability and trustworthiness of both the narrators and their testimony. The chief contributions of editors were in the form of outlines and mechanics of composition, such as supplying transitional elements to tie together accounts.

Educational Value for Young People

In an educational sense, the genre offers a unique perspective on American slavery as told from the vantage point of the victim. A primary educational value of historical instruction is its potential to reach children so that they can identify themselves with characters and situations which concretely examine some vital aspect of life. The educational content found in the genre affords many insights into the workings of slavery in this country--common ordeals, living conditions, workloads and punishments, feelings of fear and expectations of freedom.

Thus, a deeper understanding of the life and thoughts of those who were bondsmen may be perceived. A major theme which permeates the narratives is the slave's heroic resistance to a system of brutalizing dehumanization. Knowing the human story of the struggle for freedom not only enhances a positive concept of pride for black children, but also is instructive for white children to learn of the black man and woman's contribution to this country. Slave narratives, therefore, help to answer the questions raised by educators regarding the need for a truer picture of slavery to be presented to young people.

Classroom teachers looking for meaningful resource material may choose from a wide array of narrators who contributed to the American scene: William Wells Brown, an abolitionist orator, who became the first black playwright and novelist in this country; James Pennington, fugitive blacksmith, scholar, physician, and abolitionist, who wrote the first history of blacks in this country. Austin Steward, militant who led the Wilberforce Colony of fugitives in Canada; William Parker, who boldly frustrated attempts to recapture runaways in Pennsylvania. Samuel Ringgold Ward, an eloquent orator, who was known as the black Daniel Webster. Elizabeth Keckley, who as a servant and confidante of Mary Todd Lincoln, revealed with great candor what transpired behind the scenes in the White House. Henry Bibb, Lunsford Lane, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth, and others addressed Anti-Slavery audiences all over the North. According to August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, their activities probably consituted the blacks' "most important contribution to the abolitionist movement."(9)

In addition to acquainting young people with the exploits and accomplishments of "exceptional" blacks, insights into how "ordinary" slaves--the unsung heroes--lived is obtained through slave narratives. Through its selection of examples, this paper hopes to familiarize the reader with the lesser known slaves, who in resisting their bondage were no less heroic than such giants as Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth.

The following sections enumerate the multi-faceted entertainment appeals for children inherent in the American slave narrative genre. Examples are offered for incorporating these appeals into meaningful classroom activity areas of social studies, drama, music, and art.

Exciting Plots and Incidents

Most authorities agree that for children the magic word in plot interest is "adventure" whether historical, legendary or fictional. Young people love material dealing with action, danger, struggle, mystery, and humor. At about seven or eight, young people are discovering the delights of realistic or historical plots in which characters overcome great odds. According to Marion Starling, "Adventure is the chief stock and trade of the slave narrative, from the beginning to the end."(10) Regardless of the degree of emphasis on social grievances, narratives are all alike ". . . in possessing stories of adventure by individuals obliged by society to be more than usually dependent upon their own gumption, in order to satisfy the natural craving of the human soul to live like a man among men."(11) Young people will discover that heroic resistance to bondage ranged in form from open mass revolt to individuals running away. For example, according to Herbert Aptheker, there were two-hundred and fifty slave revolts and conspiracies within the area of the continental United States, the first occurring ninety-four years before the Mayflower. (12)

A considerable number of slave narratives deal with daring escapes.

Running away was considered the unpardonable sin by the master class. Accounts of spectacular rescues from evasions of slave catchers make some of the most interesting and suspense-filled reading in the genre. Moses Roper, who ran away (after being flogged) to find his mother, said: "It must be recollected that when a person is two miles from a house in that part of the country, he can hide himself in the woods for weeks, and I know a slave who held out for six months."(13) Roper, later, slipped out of bondage on a merchant ship. Henry Bibb, an escape artist matching the resourcefulness of Houdini, once said of himself: "Among other good trades, I learned the art of running away, to perfection. I made a regular business of it and never gave it up. . . ."(14)

Although not all slaves knew of the usefulness of the North Star, as did Harriet Tubman, many knew of the tactical and practical value of swamps and bushes. Nat Turner, one of the most illustrious blacks in American history, escaped into the woods and by camouflaging his hiding place, stayed there eight weeks, emerging only at night. He was finally discovered by a stray hunting dog.

It has been estimated that forty thousand to one-hundred thousand slaves escaped from slavery between 1810 and 1850. The loss of dollars to plantation owners has been estimated at thirty million dollars.(15) The majority of these escapes were thus a lethal form of resistance. One of the most imaginative of these exoduses, which employed the use

of disguises, is the story of William and Ellen Craft. (16) They obtained passes from their master for a brief visit to their friends around Christmas time. They bought the necessary clothing for the trip. However, Ellen, who was of light color, dressed in male attire and pretended to be a planter going North for medical attention. Her husband William accompanied her as a "body servant." Setting out in a coach from their master's Georgia plantation, and travelling by boat and train to Philadelphia, the couple stopped at some of the best hotels on the way.

Likewise sensational was the escape of Henry "Box" Brown, (17) who was carried from Richmond, Virginia, to Philadelphia by Adams Express in a box three feet long and two-and-a-half feet deep. Brown was shut up for twenty-seven hours, and was often placed with his head down in the box, and only escaped suffocation by using water he carried in a "beef's bladder" and by fanning himself. The box was received in Philadelphia by members of the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee, an abolitionist group. Brown, as did almost every fugitive narrator, later took to lecture platform speaking out against bondage on behalf of his enslaved fellowmen.

William Still's, The Underground Railroad recounts many tales told by fugitives of exciting escapes. Not a few of these slaves had been kidnapped from the North and sold into slavery. Such stories make Robert Louis Stevenson's Kidnapped pale in comparison. For example, Samuel Northup, a free black, was promised a job in Washington, working with a circus. When he arrived he was kidnapped and sold into bondage.

He was taken to the sugar plantations of Louisiana where he was held captive for twelve years. Peter Still was kidnapped from his New Jersey home when he was a youth. Later he was able to buy his freedom and returned at great risk to his home, to join his brother, the famous William Still, after forty years. (18) Seth Concklin, a white man, often called "a whole abolition society in himself," made a daring attempt to rescue Peter Still's wife and family from slavery in Alabama, the venture costing him his life. (19)

There are a number of incidents in slave narratives of men who made wigs from horse manes and pretended to be women in their escapes and of women who wore false beards pretending to be men. Other slaves were packed into crates or barrels, Ali Baba style, and shipped North. Some were bound to the undersides of night passenger trains. In all cases inventiveness was necessary if one was to avoid detection. Some narrators threw dust on their bodies to throw off their human scent. Some intentionally asked directions of suspicious whites and went the other direction. Slaves in port towns stowed away on ships. The most thrilling accounts in slave narratives are the strategies blacks devised to avoid being captured. Frederick Law Olmstead, after journeying to the South, regarded slaves as "born outlaws, educated self-stealers; trained from infancy to be constantly in dread of the approach of a white man as a thing more dreaded than wildcats or serpents, or even starvation." (20)

An interesting form of group resistance was the use of a "grapevine" system. Mostly every plantation had a "spy" network that supplied information from the "great house" (master's quarters) or from other plantations. Narrators Henry Clay Bruce, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and Booker T. Washington, among others, report that in the secrecy of the night, slaves would meet in a central cabin and discuss forbidden topics overheard from the master, his family or a neighbor. If newspapers were obtained, the slave or free black who could read was an important figure in the grapevine.

Many slaves would attend a standard religious service in the morning and then assemble in one another's cabins in the afternoon for an all black gathering. At night, taking great risks, they would slip away and hold meetings in the secrecy of the woods, where they would sing and pray and discuss escapes--hanging old quilts and rags from trees to prevent being detected or speak over a vessel to drown out their sounds.

Group resistance in the form of active work with the Underground Railroad also makes exciting reading and potential entertainment in the arts. It is clear that ex-slaves exerted a powerful influence in the cause of abolitionism. Harriet Tubman, Henry Bibb, Josiah Henson, and Milton Clark returned and led away their relatives to the North. The last mentioned was so effective an agent of the Underground Railroad that the slave holders in many states vowed to catch him. Josiah

Henson went fifty miles into Kentucky, and led away thirty slaves. Austin Steward helped to establish a settlement in Canada for free blacks who fled from persecution.

Humor as a technique of style occupied an essential place in the slave narratives of the 1840's and the 1850's and did much to enhance their literary value. As would be expected, the slaveholders and overseers were most often made the objects of humor by the narrators; but these writers did not fail to find humor in their own actions while slaves, even when it meant severe punishment for them.

During his escape, William Wells Brown, desperate from pangs of hunger, decided to stop at a house along the way and ask for food. The man of the house steadfastly refused to let Brown enter; his wife, however, asked him to come in. Brown was repeatedly obstructed by the man until she challenged her husband and asked Brown to enter. Brown writes: "I was never before so glad to see a woman push a man aside! Ever since that act, I have been in favor of women's rights." (21)

Often it was only when the writer was able to review in tranquility his former life as a slave that the full comic implications could be discovered by him. When the slaves were out of danger, they found incidents that occurred while they were escaping a source of comedy. Found in the slave narratives are numerous humorous comments and scenes the fugitives witnessed while traveling to the north and abroad.

Slave narratives are fraught with exciting adventures from

individual efforts from Marrant's struggles in shark-filled waters to Nat Turner's aborted group revolt. Blacks and whites working together helped slaves escape on the "starry trains" of the Underground Railroad. By 1830 there were at least fifty black organizations demanding the end of slavery. The nature of their work and characters comprising these groups make compelling reading and contain the seeds of a variety of classroom experiences.

Dynamic and Complex Characters

Young people show a marked interest in characters who are idealistically inclined and who demonstrate conviction, courage, and creativity in reaching their goals.

The physical and moral bravery of both black and white heroes and "unsung" heroes found in the narratives have already been enumerated. Narrators such as Henry Bibb, William Wells Brown, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and Samuel Ward, who achieved distinction in many fields against tremendous odds were, in addition to fighting for their rights, also battling against the notion of black inferiority.

Most of the characters in the narratives are wise in the ways of nature and everyday survival. For the most part, the slave's education was in the learning of day-to-day living, observing people and working out strategies for survival and resistance. However, as also revealed in the narratives, slaves hungered for knowledge and a sense of self. Despite great risks of severe penalty (learning to read was punishable by death in many states), James Roberts, Jamie

Parker, Frederick Douglass, Austin Steward, and others managed to beg, borrow, or steal spellers and other reading materials.

An example of just some of the inventiveness of narrators includes the ingenuity of Solomon Northup. A freeman kidnapped into slavery, his greatest desire was to think of a method of getting a letter to the post office secretly directed to some friends or family in the free state who might help him. Restrictions placed on slaves included the deprivation of pen, ink, and paper. Nevertheless, after nine years, Northup managed to obtain a sheet of paper, manufactured ink by boiling white maple bark and with old duck feathers, produced a pen. (22)

Imagination and daring, character traits especially appreciated by young people, were necessary to avoid detection; often cunning and intelligence had to be concealed, for if a slave appeared too intelligent he was difficult to sell. Lunsford Lane, for example, devoted as much of his activities to hiding his abilities as he did to secretly raising money to aid his family. As a form of resistance many slaves pretended to be docile and obedient. When he was a slave driver, Solomon Northup pretended to flog his fellow slaves and they would, in turn, act as if they had been flogged. Frederick Douglass contended that the slave often suppressed the truth rather than take the consequences of telling it, in so doing proving himself part of the "human family." (23)

The very nature of the slave condition renders characterization complex though not necessarily incomprehensible to children. Men, for example, were often forced by circumstance of slavery to deceive their fellow slaves. William Wells Brown once tricked an unsuspecting free black man to go to jail in his stead and receive twenty lashes intended for Brown. After his escape, Brown deeply regretted the deception he practiced on the other man. Children, like everyone else, are not all good or all bad. If they recognize this, they can recognize that for a characterization to be complex and real life, it cannot be totally morally good at the same time. Educators in the field of Afro-American history agree that renowned black figures of the past must be presented as humans, with the strengths and flaws of humanity, "not lifeless marble statues, even if that marble is black." (24)

The social types permeating the genre include strong character possibilities for panel discussions and role-playing situations. There were slaves who adapted to the system, those who resisted in a variety of ways, and those who pretended to adapt in order to survive. Adding to the complexity of characterization, it is important to remember that at times a rebellious slave could be loyal to his master and a loyal slave, when pushed too far, would fight back. Thus, according to many narrators, slaves could assume the strategic appearance of obedience to their masters, seeming most satisfied at the moment they were, indeed, most discontented. Militants, as we have seen,

expressed themselves by either running away, fighting back, or revolting intellectually by speaking out against the system. (25)

There are accounts of slaves such as Josiah Henson and Henry "Box" Brown who first adapted to the system and then revolted against it. A number of slaves, such as Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth, combined all three forms of militant resistance in varying degrees. Those looking for deep and worthwhile figures to discuss and dramatize, can choose from an extensive gallery of characters, including: informers, white and black overseers, cruel masters and "kinder" ones, field slaves and "aristocratic" house servants, preachers and story-tellers, and local healers either skilled in root medicine or capable of interpreting dreams.

Penetrating Language and Lyrical Songs

Children, as do adults, appreciate clever dialogue, verbal wit, and language which contains vivid imagery. Younger children are especially fascinated by word play, which can range in nature from rough-and-tumble aggressive humor to poetic flights of fancy.

In Douglass' narrative, for example, his loss of freedom is compared metaphorically to ships and birds; Henry "Box" Brown compares the separation of slaves to the scattering of leaves. Slaves delighted in telling anecdotes in which their true and private feelings merged. In Northup's narrative the master is known as "hogeye" or "hogjaw." Frederick Douglass refers to the "nigger-

breaker," Covey, as "snake." From a white point of view, selling a slave was referred to as "putting a slave in one's pocket." Escapes, according to many of the narrators, were "taking the long walk."

In addition to its tragic and sorrowful moments, the escape lore of the slave narrators had its portion of comic scenes and humorous dialogue, in which slaves poked fun at themselves as they did at their masters. Often, the master was unaware that he was the object of derision because a humorous line could be subtly disguised. Faithful Jack recalled a supposed conversation he had with his master on the latter's death bed: "Farewell, massa . . . pleasant journey; you soon be there, it's all the way down hill." (26) When in England on a visit to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Josiah Henson claimed that he graduated from "the university of adversity." Lewis Clarke asked ironically, if a slave were property, how could he steal from his master? "If both a slave and a horse were missing from a plantation, who was to say the horse did not steal the slave?" (27)

Religious, dance, and work songs also acted as subtle forms of resistance. For example, spirituals, regarded by the masters as beautiful expressions of longing for another world, were often expressions of outrage and contempt. Douglass remarked that spirituals had less to do with "a world of spirits" than with ". . . a speedy pilgrimage . . . from all the dangers of slavery." (28) Grace Mims observes that such references to the "Promised Land of Canaan,"

gospel trains, and ships crossing over to Jordan were familiar metaphors used by runaways and Underground Railroad agents. (29) A song such as "Let My People Go" was satisfying both to master and slave for entirely different reasons. Thus, spirituals could be regarded as a major weapon of resistance. For example, the story of Samson expressed the deepest feelings of submerged protest: "If I had my way, I'd tear this building down. . . ." Spirituals were furthermore an important part of anti-slavery gatherings, used to "put fire" into the meetings.(30) Enduring the long years of bondage, many narrators would sing and dance at times, not because they were happy but to "keep trouble down" and to keep their hearts from being completely broken.

Varied and Vivid Settings

For the city youngster, the slave narrative genre presents such interesting and varied locales as southern plantations, cities of the nineteenth century and continents far away as Africa and England. Period dress and props are likewise fascinating to youngsters. The settings of escape lore include swamps, forests, and Indian settlements. Fugitives utilized boats, trains, wagons, and other modes of transportation.

The narratives abound in passages which illustrate a strong interest in the beauties of nature in contrast to the ugliness of the slave system. According to Margaret Jackson, "one element of nature that received much attention from the narrators was the North

Star, personified by most fugitives as the living, benevolent guide of the slave freedom, and hence recognized as the symbol of liberty." (31) For those who were aware of the significance of the North Star (and many slaves were ignorant of its importance), it was truly the slave's friend. This romantic symbol of the slaves' struggle for freedom, as well as the many realistic visual manifestations of the slaves' struggle--disguises, secret meeting places, and props (such as drinking gourds) used as codes--provide entertaining possibilities for art and related projects.

Suggestions for Classroom Projects

Students may wish to read narratives especially adapted for children (32), put on plays based on narratives, or create their own improvised situations and scenes based on slave narrative material. The class may wish to read, recount, or enact favorite passages from one particular narrative--contrasting the different modes of escape and other forms of resistance.

A number of plays have been written specifically about the Underground Railroad which are suitable for acting by young people. These include Aurand Harris' Steal Away Home (33) which is about two youngsters who escape from North Carolina via the Underground Railroad network; Joanna Kraus' Mean to Be Free (34), which is about Harriet Tubman; and "The Ballad of Box Brown," a music drama about Henry Brown's daring escape in a box, adapted by the writer of this article. (35) With a minimum props and an abudance of imagination,

children may devise their own informal, creative dramatics plays which feature improvised dialogue and movement.

Teachers can assign various committees the topic of slavery, each presenting the viewpoint of a special historical group--slaves, slaveholders, free soilers, abolitionists, and so forth (36). Discussions and debates can be set up in which young people address themselves to such questions as: regardless of race, what are the characteristics "Freedom fighters" must possess; how do specific periods of history shape the struggle for freedom; what common qualities did the black slaves in this country share with the enslaved Hebrews in Egypt--in what ways did they differ? What qualities did the black slaves have in common with the American Indian--in what ways did they differ? Were there slaves in Haiti and other Caribbean countries--in what ways did they and their actions differ from slaves in this country? What qualities comprise a hero? Is there something special about black heroes?

Teams may wish to volunteer to research and report on black abolitionist history in the area of the school community. For example, kindergarten and first graders at New York City P.S. 243 in Bedford-Stuyvesant, with the help of historians and archeologists, have been digging at sites near the school, literally uncovering signs of a highly organized black community which existed from the 1830's to about 1890. The youngsters discovered that the Underground Railroad

had a terminal in their community (then known as Weeksville). Historical facts and artifacts observed first-hand have been developed in a curriculum unit, which has been distributed throughout the school's district. (37)

Spirituals and work songs provide a wealth of resource material for classroom and recreational projects: group sings, choral work, and singing combined with dramatization and dance. Children may enjoy discussing and writing essays on the origins of spirituals, with their built-in codes of resistance. They can discuss how African music has influenced music in this country. African dances, as well as dances from the period of slavery, can be tried out in the classroom. Children can also discuss and make some of the instruments which were used to accompany group singing and dancing. Recordings of spirituals can be played and the young people's own renditions of these spirituals can be tape-recorded and contrasted with the music of today.

Groups can build a diorama or larger scale version of a southern plantation or slave quarters. These may be contrasted with an artistic replication of a northern or Canadian Underground Railroad station. Children can draw and paint their perceptions of the disguises used by enterprising black narrators. They can have fun making and wearing costumes of the period. Visits can be arranged to museums in the area, which may have displays relating to the subject. Trips may also be taken to locales and places connected with abolitionism, such

as Frederick Douglass' home in Rochester, New York, or Anacostia, Washington, D. C. And, of course, a variety of artistic expressions can be combined in exciting multi-media programs and assemblies. Children participating should be encouraged in every way to come up with their own ideas for activities.

Summary

Examples from the narratives were offered demonstrating that slave biographies and autobiographies deal with the worthwhile theme of the denial of and struggle for freedom and contain exciting adventure plots consisting of mystery, romance, risk-taking and disguises. Characters striving for freedom exhibit positive traits such as conviction, courage, and creativity. Dialogue, as well as song lyrics, contain humor and wit and often act as coded forms of resistance. The settings found in the slave narrative genre offer vivid and varied locales of potential interest to young people. Suggestions were offered on how these materials can be integrated with a variety of classroom activities--music, art, writing, discussion, debate, dramatization, and dance. In sum, the story of the black runaway--who escaped the slave status under great risk to live as a free man or woman--comprises one of the most meaningful chapters in our country's history. The slave narrative genre is an "escape literature" which is hardly escapist. As such, it inherently offers resource material which all children should find compelling and inspiring.

NOTES

1. See, for example, James A. Banks, Teaching the Black Experience (Belmont, Calif.: Fearon Publishers, 1970); William F. Cheek, Black Resistance Before the Civil War (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Glencoe Press, 1970); Mark M. Krug, "Freedom and Racial Quality: A Study of 'Revised' High School History Texts," School Review, LXXVIII (May, 1970), 303-313; Edwin S. Redkey, "On Teaching and Learning Black History," in Black Studies in the University, ed. by Armstead L. Robinson (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1969), p. 186.

2. Melville J. Herskovits, The Myth of the Negro Past (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958), p. 299.

3. Charles H. Wesley, Neglected History: Essays in Negro History (Wilberforce, Ohio: Central State College, 1965), p. 27.

4. Gilbert Osofsky, ed., Puttin' On Ole Massa (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), pp. 20-21. This volume contains the slave narratives of Henry Bibb, William Wells Brown, and Solomon Northup.

5. Marion W. Starling, "The Slave Narrative: Its Place in American Literary History" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1946), p. 1.

6. Vernon Loggins, The Negro Author, His Development in America (New York: Kennikat, 1931), p. 41.

7. William Loren Katz, ed., Five Slave Narratives (New York: Arno Press and The New York Times, 1969), p. xx[illegible]. This volume includes the narratives of William Wells Brown, Moses Grandy, Lunsford Lane, J. W. C. Pennington, and Jacob Stroyer.

8. Charles H. Nichols, Many Thousand Gone: The Ex-Slaves' Account of Their Bondage and Freedom (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1963), p. x. I am indebted to Dr. Nichols for much of the theoretical background of the slave narrative genre.

9. August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, From Plantation to Ghetto (New York: Hill and Wang, 1970), p. 128.

10. Starling, "The Slave Narrative," p. 67.

11. Ibid.

12. Lerone Bennett, Jr., Before the Mayflower (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966), p. 101.

13. Moses Roper, A Narrative of Moses Roper's Adventures and Escape from American Slavery (London: Dartner & Harvey, 1840), p. 59.

14. Henry Bibb, Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb reprinted in Osofsky, Puttin' on Ole Massa, p. 65.

15. John Hope Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), p. 260.

16. William Craft, Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom (London: W. Tweedie Co., 1860) reprinted in Arna Bontemps, ed., Great Slave Narratives (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), pp. 269-331. This volume contains the slave narratives of the Crafts, James Pennington, and Gustavus Vassa.

17. Henry Brown, Narrative of Henry "Box" Brown (Boston: Brown and Stearns, 1849). Reprinted in Charles H. Nichols, ed., Black Men in Chains (New York: Lawrence Hill & Co., 1972), pp. 179-199. This volume also includes the narratives, or excerpts from the narratives of William Wells Brown, Israel Campbell, the Crafts, Frederick Douglass, Moses Grandy, Josiah Henson, Harriet Jacobs, Solomon NOrthup, William Parker, James Pennington, Moses Roper, John Thompson, Nat Turner, and Gustavus Vassa.

18. Kate Pickard, The Kidnapped and the Ransomed (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1970), facsimile edition, published in 1856.

19. William Still, ed., The Underground Railroad (Philadelphia: People's Publishing Co., 1871), passim. (New York: Arno Press, 1968 reprint.)

20. Quoted in Bennett, Before the Mayflower, p. 91.

21. William Wells Brown, Narrative of William Wells Brown, A Fugitive Slave, Written by Himself (Boston: The Anti-Slavery Office, 1847), p. 106.

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23. Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (Boston: Anti-Slavery Office, 1845)(Garden City, N. Y.: Dolphin Books, 1963, reprint), p. 20.

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29. A. Grace Mims, "Soul, the Black Man and His Music," The Negro History Bulletin (October, 1970), p. 33.

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32. See, for example, Jacqueline Bernard, Journey Toward Freedom (New York: Dell, 1967); Arna Bontemps, Frederick Douglass: Slave--Fighter--Freeman (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969); Abraham Chapman, ed., Steal Away (New York: Prager, 1971); Florence Freedman, Two Tickets to Freedom: The True Story of Ellen and William Craft--Fugitive Slaves (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971); Julius Lester, To Be A Slave (New York: Dial Press, 1968); Helen Stone Peterson, Sojourner Truth: Fearless Crusader (Champaign, Ill.: Garrard, 1972); Barbara Ritchie, ed., Archie Moore, Memoirs of a Fugitive (New York: Crowell, 1971); Ruby Zagoren, Venture for Freedom: The True Story of an African Yankee (New York: The World Publishing Co., 1969).

33. Aurand Harris, Steal Away Home (Anchorage, Ky.: Anchorage Press, Inc., 1972). The play is based on the novel of the same title by Jean Kristof.

34. Joanna Halpert Kraus, Mean to Be Free (New York: New Plays for Children, 1967).

35. Milton E. Polsky, "Oh, Freedom: Theoretical and Practical Problems in the Transformation of Three American Slave Narratives into Original Plays for Young People" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1973), pp. 479-544. The volume also contains "Early in the Morning," a play about Sojourner Truth and "Lions in the Way," a play about young Frederick Douglass. Videotape excerpts of "The Ballad of 'Box' Brown" are available from the Hunter College TV Center.

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37. "Weeksville: A Treasury of Black History," New York Post, October, 5, 1971, p. 2.